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NEWS RELEASE

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**Trio Charged in Connection With Murder
of Off-Duty LAPD Officer**

Two suspected gang members were charged today with killing an off-duty Los Angeles police officer last month in Lincoln Heights, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Cristian Facundo (dob 5/28/99) of Murrieta and Francisco Talamantes III (dob 8/11/95) of Temecula were each charged in case BA480085 with one count of murder and two counts of attempted murder with the special circumstance allegation of murder while they are active participants in a criminal street gang, making them eligible for the death penalty.

Both men, along with Ashlynn Smith (dob 7/6/01), also of Temecula, each face one count of shooting at an occupied motor vehicle and vandalism. Smith also faces one count of accessory after the fact, while Talamantes was charged with one count of possession of a firearm by a felon.

Arraignment is expected today in Department 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center.

Deputy District Attorney Michael Blake of the Crimes Against Peace Officers Section is prosecuting the case.

On July 27, the defendants were involved in a confrontation with a group of people including 24-year-old Los Angeles Police Officer Juan Diaz, who was off-duty at the time. Facundo allegedly opened fire, killing Diaz and wounding another man.

All three defendants also are accused of vandalizing a vehicle less than an hour before Diaz's murder. After the murder, Facundo and Talamantes allegedly were driven back to the vandalism scene by Smith and are accused of an attempted murder there, the prosecutor said.

If convicted as charged, the defendants face a possible maximum sentence of life in state prison without the possibility of parole or death. A decision on whether to seek the death penalty will be made at a later date.

The case remains under investigation by the Los Angeles Police Department's Robbery-Homicide Division.

[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.